



Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

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Determination of the Winter 2020 and  
Summer 2020-21 Seasons  
for Outdoor Community Sports

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# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

DATE - 25 June 2020

## PARTIES

This Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) is made between:

Name:

- **AFL Victoria**
- **Baseball Victoria**
- **Cricket Victoria**
- **Football Victoria**
- **Hockey Victoria**
- **Lacrosse Victoria**
- **Little Athletics Victoria**
- **NRL Victoria**
- **Rugby Victoria**
- **Softball Victoria**
- **Touch Victoria**

**For and on behalf of Outdoor Community Sports**

- **Maroondah City Council**
- **Surf Coast Shire Council**

**For and on behalf of LGA representatives on the LGA Sport COVID-19 Working Group**

## 1. Background

- a. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to provide guidance to community sport (represented by State Sporting Associations (SSAs), Local Government Authorities (LGAs) and other landowners and managers) regarding agreement on the dates for the Winter 2020 Season and Summer 2020-21 Season for outdoor sports who may share sports fields.
- b. State Sporting Associations (named above) may also wish to apply the terms of the MoU to provide clarity to their members and stakeholders.
- c. On 16 March 2020, the Government of Victoria declared a State of Emergency to combat Covid-19. As a result of the measures, the Winter 2020 season was postponed for all sports.
- d. The parties to this MoU have been working together to ensure that when restrictions are lifted, winter sports will have opportunity to undertake a feasible season, despite the delay in commencement as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. This is recognised as important for member re-engagement, sustainability of the individual sport and improved social connections in the community.
- e. Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) established the LGA Sport Covid-19 Working Group (the working group) in April 2020 to support co-operation between LGAs, SSAs and other stakeholders. One of the priorities of the

working group was to develop a consistent approach to season dates for community sport.

- f. An Outdoor Sports Workstream composed of relevant SSAs, LGAs and SRV representatives was established to consider this priority.
- g. AFL Victoria and Cricket Victoria are members of both the working group and the workstream. They represent the two most popular outdoor community sports in Victoria and are the only sports in Victoria to be party to a formal determination of seasons agreement.
- h. Both organisations are party to the *Division of Seasons and Occupation of Crown Lands used as grounds for Australian Rules Football competition and Cricket competition*. Although only applicable to Crown land, this agreement has formed the basis of season delineation for all landowners and managers.
- i. The current agreement, executed on 31 January 2019 for a three-year period, stipulates that the winter season can be conducted from 1 April to 30 September and the summer season can be conducted from 1 October to 31 March.
- j. This agreement is voluntary and can be changed anytime by the parties through mutual agreement.
- k. In response to Covid-19, AFL Victoria entered into good faith negotiations with Cricket Victoria to seek a variation to the determination of seasons for the Winter 2020 and Summer 2020-21 Seasons only.
- l. Parties to this MoU supported the negotiations between AFL Victoria and Cricket Victoria in order to foster a consistent approach to season determination for all outdoor sports, where possible.
- m. On 22 May 2020, AFL Victoria and Cricket Victoria agreed to the *Winter to Summer Seasons 2020 Transition Framework* which varies the agreement referred to in 1h. above (see **Attachment 1**). A media release announcing this agreement was released on 22 May 2020 (see **Attachment 2**).
- n. No terms in the MoU override the terms of the *Winter to Summer Seasons 2020 Transition Framework* between Cricket Victoria and AFL Victoria.
- o. No terms in the MoU override the terms of the *Winter to Summer Seasons 2020 Transition Framework* between Cricket Victoria and Football Victoria.

## 2. Objectives

- a. The parties to this MoU acknowledge that while this MoU is not legally binding, it is made in good faith to support equitable access to, and enjoyment of all sports.
- b. The parties to this MoU encourage acceptance of the determination of Winter 2020 season dates and other terms by all LGAs, leagues and clubs in the interest of consistency and fairness.

### 3. Agreement on the determination of seasons

- a. The parties to this MoU acknowledge that:
  - i. The home and away season for the Winter 2020 Season will be played up until (and inclusive of) 27 September 2020, for the purposes of shared facilities being made available for the commencement of the Summer 2020-21 Season
  - ii. Juniors finals for the Winter 2020 Season will be played up until (and inclusive of) 11 October 2020, for the purposes of shared facilities being made available for the commencement of the Summer 2020-21 Season
  - iii. Seniors finals requiring shared facilities for the Winter 2020 season will be played up until (and inclusive of) 18 October 2020.
- b. Regardless of when restrictions are lifted and winter sports are permitted to resume, all competitions utilising shared facilities must be complete by and inclusive of 18 October 2020, noting that only a limited number of venues will be utilised up until this point for senior finals fixtures.
- c. For Winter Season sports where shared facilities are not required, these sports will endeavour to complete their season by the end of October 2020 to maximise participation opportunities for all Victorians.
- d. Under this agreement there will be a progressive staggered availability of shared facilities for preparation for Summer Season sport from the end of September (27) 2020, allowing transition to commence from 28 September 2020.
- e. In the circumstance that winter sport is unable to be conducted during the Winter 2020 Season for any reason, the Summer 2020-21 season may commence as of 1 October 2020.
- f. Where Australian Rules football competitions choose not to commence their season or have completed their season by the end of September, Cricket Associations shall retain priority flexibility to schedule matches from 1 October on all cricket facilities shared with Australian Rules football.
- g. In the circumstance that Australian Rules football competition does not proceed, and other winter sports wish to conduct competition sport, it is anticipated that winter and summer sports will work together in good faith, including with local associations and relevant Local Government Authorities to manage any requirements for access to shared facilities.
- h. Cricket shall retain priority access to all 21 Premier Cricket (Men and Women) 'main' grounds (see **Attachment 3**) from 1 October.
- i. For the purpose of implementing 3a. finals matches shall prioritise utilisation of single-use facilities that do not require preparation to be used for the Summer 2020-21 Season. The prioritisation ranking (in order) of grounds for use by winter sports during all finals shall (where practicable) be as follows:
  - a. Grounds/Fields without a cricket pitch; then
  - b. Grounds/Fields with a synthetic cricket pitch.

- c. No facilities with turf cricket wickets should be utilised after 1 October, unless otherwise stipulated in the Transition Framework agreement listed in section 1n.
- j. Every effort shall be made to protect all turf wickets including covering, preparing, roping off the centre square outside of matches and training from the third week of September at the latest.
- k. This is a one-off season modification in response to Covid-19 for 2020 only. It is anticipated that sports will revert to their previous seasonal arrangements in 2021.

**4. Agreement on guiding principles**

- a. Local clubs, leagues and associations are encouraged to be flexible and innovative to maximise opportunities for both winter and summer sports.
- b. The parties to this MoU agree to support practical considerations relating to shared facilities, fixturing and scheduling.
- c. Winter and summer outdoor sports are encouraged to work closely with one another and with land managers as early as possible, to identify grounds to be utilised during October (for finals fixtures) to ensure preparation of other grounds for the Summer season (particularly for turf wickets) can occur as early as possible.
- d. Discussions between winter and summer outdoor sports on access to facilities, including for training and ground maintenance purposes, should be undertaken in the spirit of co-operation and fairness.
- e. Local Government has a key role to play in the delivery of community sport and in ensuring the smooth transition from winter to summer sports.

**SIGNED**

**on behalf of outdoor community sports by**

Ricky Bell, AFL Victoria

*Ricky Bell*

Kristie Middleton, Baseball Victoria

*Kristie Middleton*

Luke Humphries, Cricket Victoria

*Luke Humphries*

Matthew Green, Football Victoria

*Matthew Green*

Andrew Skillern, Hockey Victoria

*Andrew Skillern*

Michael Sholly, Lacrosse Victoria

Michael Sholly

Anthony McIntosh, Little Athletics

Anthony McIntosh

Brent Silva, NRL Victoria

Brent Silva

Chris Evans, Rugby Victoria

Chris Evans

Nick Frayne, Softball Victoria

Nick Frayne

Ella Squires, Touch Victoria

Ella Squires

**SIGNED on behalf of LGA representatives on  
the LGA Sport COVID-19 Working Group by**

Tim Cocks, Maroondah City Council

Tim Cocks

Shaan Briggs, Surf Coast Shire Council

Shaan Briggs

**WITNESSED by**

Philip Saikaly, Director Community  
Infrastructure & Place

Sport and Recreation Victoria on behalf of  
the Department of Jobs, Precincts &  
Regions

Philip Saikaly

25 June 2020